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To meet the critical workforce shortage in hospitality as identified by the U.S. Department of Labor, Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) launched the Hospitality, Culinary Arts and Tourism Institute (HCAT) in 2001 to provide high quality, comprehensive education, training and services vital to the growth and prosperity of hospitality and tourism education. AACC, in collaboration with WorldLink Education and Globalform, the Italian educational sponsor, initiated a comprehensive culinary internship program. For ten weeks each summer, students live and work on the beautiful Amalfi coast of Italy. Many of the world's finest hotels and restaurants, as designated by Conde Naste, are located in this region. Program fees cover almost all of the student's needs including air and ground transportation and excellent housing. The college is committed to keeping costs affordable and offers scholarships whenever possible. In several years, all students participating have received scholarships. AACC works with WorldLink Education, to facilitate all the necessary VISA and insurance paperwork requirements.

To launch the program in 2003, AACC brought four members of the Italian Culinary Olympic team to HCAT for a series of classes to launch HCAT's expansion into Italian internships for culinary students. WorldLink Education provided synchronous interpretation and each of the classes were at maximum capacity. For students to be eligible for the internship, they must first pass a rigorous practical exam based on the American Culinary Federation's (ACF) certified culinarian test. Students are also required to complete an Italian language class once selected for the program.

The Italian internship revolves around the students working in the kitchen with award winning chefs five or six days per week in one of these leading resorts. Currently, the participating resorts include Le Sirenuse, Capo D'Orso, Il San Pietro, and Hotel Santa Caterina among other highly regarded properties. In addition to the work experience, students participate in field trips and other cultural immersion activities. An on-site Italian instructor, who is familiar with the local restaurant industry, provides daily support, conducts field trips, and assists with the student's work-based learning.

As a result of this program, students gain advanced technical skills that set them apart from other candidates for most culinary positions. Many of these students have accepted positions in high-end restaurants around the country, such as Café Milano in Washington, DC and Ventana Inn and Spa in Big Sur, California. More than 60 students have participated in this Italian internship program.